

News Release



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Voices Old and New at the Wooden House - A poetry reading at the U.S. Immigration Station, Angel Island, Sunday May 17

SAN FRANCISCO - In celebration of Asian Pacific American Heritage month, the Angel Island Immigration Station Foundation and the Angel Island State Park will hold a poetry reading at the historic U.S. Immigration Station, Angel Island on Sunday, May 17 from 1 p.m. to 2 p.m. This National Historic Landmark was preserved, restored, and reopened to the public recently. The Immigration Station was the point of entry for over one million immigrants from over 80 nations between 1910 and 1940. This "Ellis Island of the West" is known for the Chinese poems and other inscriptions written and carved on the barracks walls. Immigrants spent weeks and months undergoing interrogations to verify their legal right to enter the United States.

Playwright/Poet Genny Lim, author of the award-winning play Paper Angels and several collections of poetry, Winter Place, Child of War, and ISLAND: Poetry and History of Chinese Immigrants on Angel Island 1910-1940, will recite a few of the poems written by immigrants at the Detention Barracks, known in Chinese as "the wooden house" as well as new poems from her book, Pilgrimage. Poets from Kearny Street Workshop's P-Cubed, The Postcard Poetry Project: A Literary and Visual Exchange between Kearny Street Workshop and the Asian American Writers' Workshop will also read original works. The Postcard Poets - Thy Tran,

Cathlin Goulding, Lisa Leong, Khoi Nguyen, and Truc Nguyen, are led by Debbie Yee, whose poems will be featured in Best American Poetry 2009.

Several Bay Area leaders, including President of the San Francisco Board of Supervisors, David Chiu; San Francisco Supervisor Eric Mar; Marin Community Foundation President Dr. Tom Peters; California State Parks Superintendent Danita Rodriguez ; and others will read poems written by Angel Island immigrants.

The program is free. Please bring lawn chairs or blankets for festival seating at the Immigration Station. Refreshments are available at the Angel Island Café.

Free, self-guided tours of the Detention Barracks and the new interpretive panels on Immigration Station grounds are available before and after the poetry reading program. Visitors are encouraged to read aloud the hundreds of poems carved onto the walls. English translations will be available.

Ferry service to Angel Island is available from San Francisco on the Blue and Gold Fleet, which departs from Pier 41 at 9:45 a.m., 11:45 a.m. and 1:50 p.m. Round-trip tickets are \$15.00/adult and \$8.50/children. Return service to San Francisco is at 2:55 p.m. and 4:15 p.m.

To reach Angel Island from Tiburon, take the Tiburon ferry at 10 a.m., 11 a.m. 12 p.m., and 1 p.m. The roundtrip fee is \$13.50/adult and \$ 11.50/children. Return service to Tiburon is at 3:20 p.m., 4:20 p.m. and 5:20 p.m.

For more information about the program, call 415 262-4429. For more information about the U.S. Immigration Station at Angel Island State Park, call 415 435-5537.

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